DC #3

DIRECT CURRENTS

Books Shipping April 12 thru May 10

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BATMAN: THE CULT
4-issue Prestige Format series

COPS
Ongoing monthly

THE POWER OF THE ATOM
Ongoing monthly

WHO'S WHO '88
4-issue mini-series

THE WORLD OF METROPOLIS
4-issue mini-series

PLUS . . .

An interview with William Messner-Loebs

Cover Of The Month
YOUNG ALL-STARS #15

THE POWER OF THE ATOM UNLEASHED

His years in the jungle have taught him how to survive anywhere . . . and now the world's smallest super-hero, **THE ATOM**, is back in an all-new ongoing series, **THE POWER OF THE ATOM**.

Ray Palmer returns to the United States, leaving behind the South American jungle civilization and its people he had embraced in THE SWORD OF THE ATOM mini-series. But the America he comes home to is different and it's all he can do to readjust to the changes.

And that's to say nothing of the physical changes THE ATOM has undergone since he's been gone.

It's a whole new life of solid super-hero action for THE ATOM, brought to you in THE POWER OF THE ATOM, a monthly ongoing series by writer Roger Stern, penciller Dwayne Turner and inker Keith Wilson.

But before you step into THE ATOM'S bold new future, you'll want to take a look into his past, beginning as one of the premier super-heroes of comics' Silver Age. The story is told in the pages of SECRET ORIGINS #29, written and pencilled by POWER OF THE ATOM regulars Stern, Turner and Wilson.

THE POWER OF THE ATOM #1 . . . it's where the world's smallest hero proves it's not *size* that counts.

JOIN THE BATMAN . . . AND THE CULT

Will you be joining THE CULT?

THE BATMAN has devoted his life to battling crime and evil in the streets of Gotham City, but he's never faced an evil the likes of the Cult of the charismatic Deacon Blackfire . . . and he may not survive the ordeal to ever face another foe.

BATMAN: THE CULT is a four-book, Prestige Format mini-series, written by Jim Starlin and featuring the art of Berni Wrightson (the creative team behind the recent hit mini-series THE WEIRD). Wrightson also provides the painted covers for the four books in the series.

BATMAN: THE CULT Book One sets THE BATMAN in "Pursuit," leading him down into the sewers beneath Gotham after the Cult of Deacon Blackfire. But the trail leads to an unexpected journey that takes the Darknight Detective through the dark and terrifying recess of his own mind.

To prepare you for the BATMAN event of 1988, we're also bringing you the BATMAN: THE CULT poster. It's a full-process color, 22" × 28" poster featuring a new painting of THE BATMAN by Berni Wrightson that brings the drama of THE CULT to life.

Will THE BATMAN survive his weeks of torment? Can he be made to help the maniacal Deacon Blackfire destroy Gotham City?

The tale will be told in the four books of the BATMAN: THE CULT Prestige Format mini-series . . . a tale that will change THE BATMAN forever.

THE COPS ON PATROL

The #1 comics publisher and the #1 toy manufacturer get together this month on a new toy tie-in series: **COPS**™ (Central Organization of Police Specialists). This toy is destined to be as popular as the other Hasbro successes: G.I. Joe and Transformers.

COPS focuses on the future, when crime does not pay. Taking place in the not-too-distant future, the series depicts an urban development gone haywire, with organized crime groups trying to evade law enforcement agencies. The highly specialized and trained COPS team strives to put an end to the far-reaching criminal network of the underworld.

COPS debuts first as a DC Comic monthly series written by Doug Moench and pencilled by Pat Broderick, and as a toy line. Then, in the fall, a 64-episode syndicated television series is likely to propel this series into even greater popularity.

Paul Kupperberg, Writer
Peggy May, Editor
Julia Sabbagh, Designer

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WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF METROPOLIS

Two of the most influential men in SUPERMAN'S life . . . two men on the opposite ends of the scale of morality . . . two men who share a terrible secret just as they share their lives in **THE WORLD OF METROPOLIS**.

The first of these men is PERRY WHITE, hard-hitting editor of The Daily Planet, whose connection to the city his newspaper serves is as deep as his heart. The other is LEX LUTHOR, whose twisted genius and power have brought him to the pinnacle of power over Metropolis.

Each has a dream for the city, one to see it grow into a safe and thriving place for its citizens, the other to hold it in his ruthless grasp. Discover what secret PERRY WHITE and LEX LUTHOR share . . . a secret that affects every man, woman and child who inhabit THE WORLD OF METROPOLIS.

And that's only issue #1!

THE WORLD OF METROPOLIS is a four-issue mini-series that continues our year-long in-depth look at the history of SUPERMAN and the people and places in his life. Subsequent issues will delve into the unique, intriguing and sometimes desperate lives of Superman's closest friends, Lois Lane, Jimmy Olsen and Clark Kent.

Written by John Byrne and pencilled by Winslow Mortimer, THE WORLD OF METROPOLIS will show you the way around one of the most fascinating cities in the world . . . and into the souls of two of its most intriguing citizens.

WHO'S WHO IN 1988

What's the latest information on BRAINIAC? Who are the members of THE CHOSEN? How does the secret CHECKMATE agency operate?

The answers to all these questions (and others you probably haven't even thought of yet) are to be found in this year's **WHO'S WHO IN THE DC UNIVERSE UPDATE '88**.

It's the place to go to get all the vital information and statistics on DC's new and revised characters, as brought to you by the writers and artists who know them best. WHO'S WHO UPDATE '88 #1 covers the new and revised characters from BRAINIAC to CHECKMATE and features all-new art by John Byrne, Jerry Ordway and Kevin Nowlan, and a wraparound cover by Paris Cullins.

WHO'S WHO IN THE DC UNIVERSE UPDATE '88 is a four-issue mini-series . . . one that any true fan and DC Comics historian can't afford to miss.

FROM • THE EDITOR

Hi again.

What's your week like? My week consists of Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Freelancer Friday.

You see, on Fridays, DC Comics' New York area-based freelance artists and writers head into the cheese grater building—well, the decor on the outside of this metal building kinda looks like a cheese grater—at 666 Fifth Avenue. In droves, they pile into one of eight elevators that head up to the eighth floor. They hear the all-too-loud Muzak and stop on nearly every floor until they reach the famed eighth floor, where those crazy people work.

Folks at DC Comics don't dress like regular business people. (Well, the DC Comics business people do, but there's only about seven or eight of us.) The rest of the crew dresses like normal people: comfortable clothes.

Anyway, back to the freelance artists and writers.

They arrive on the eighth floor, swing into the DC Comics offices, ignore the life-sized statue of Clark Kent that sits in the reception area, head right past the security check and make a beeline for the couch outside Kitchen #2. (Yes, there is a Kitchen #1, an equally tiny cubby hole that includes a mini-refrigerator, a coffee pot, a sink and a cabinet that holds cans of soda. At least, there's usually soda there for a day or two a week, right after the weekly delivery. I think the cabinets drink sodas the way driers eat socks.)

But I digress (again, I know).

In clusters, these artists and writers mill about the kitchen, hoping that Andy Helfer (whose office is right across from the kitchen) will arrive in the office before noon; that Editorial Coordinator Pat Bastienne will have a job for them; that Bob Greenberger will have the latest news on the industry—and that he'll spill the information without much prompting. But mostly they wait for those sacred people in the accounting department to bring the checks they've worked all week to earn.

I always know when the checks arrive. That's when the sound level goes down. That's when the chatting about "Have you seen the latest issue of so-and-so?" and "What are you working on?" becomes complete and utter silence. Just to be sure this isn't a clever ploy to get me out of my office—I tend to close the door when the noise level reaches a 7 on the not-so-Richter scale—I wait a polite 30 seconds. Sure enough, the area is deserted. They're all off turning their checks into the more convenient form of green cash.

Then the fun starts.

Often, editor Mike Carlin starts coordinating a group of at least 20 people to go to the local Mexican restaurant for dinner. Sometimes, a movie is the order of the evening. (Ever tried to attend a movie with 20 people, all of whom have been working all week, waiting for Friday to get out and socialize?)

And then it's the weekend. That's when we do all of our chores, catch up on our comic book reading and dream up what havoc we can wreak in the office in the next week.

And then it's Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and, again, Freelancer Friday.

See ya,

Peggy

BOOKS SHIPPING APRIL 12

ACTION COMICS WEEKLY #602
The weekly excitement continues with six super-features, including Green Lantern by Jim Owsley and penciller Gil Kane; Deadman by Mike Baron, Dan Jurgens and Tony DeZuniga; The Secret Six by Martin Pasko and Dan Spiegle; Wild Dog by Max Allan Collins, Terry Beatty and John Nyberg; Blackhawk by Mike Grell, Rich Burchett and Pablo Marcos; and Superman, by Roger Stern, Curt Swan and John Beatty. The cover, featuring Green Lantern, is by George Pérez.

ACTION COMICS WEEKLY #602

CHECKMATE #5
Gun smugglers are operating out of Dallas, and the Knights of Checkmate must track an international conspiracy that threatens the peace and stability of the Middle East. Written by Paul Kupperberg, with art by Steve Erwin and Al Vey. Plus: Part 2 of the "Making of a Knight" as the agent candidate faces the mechanized dangers of The Dome. Written by Kupperberg. *New Format.*

CINDER AND ASHE #4
(of a four-issue mini-series)
A twist of fate, an unexpected foe and death are the ingredients awaiting the damage control experts in the monumental and stunning series conclusion. Written by Gerry Conway, with art and cover by José Luis García-López.
Suggested for Mature Readers. Deluxe Format.

THE CRIMSON AVENGER #3
(of a four-issue mini-series)
The San Francisco World's Fair serves as the backdrop for the Crimson and Wing's showdown with the killers of the Dark Cross . . . and the truth about Sonya is finally revealed. Written by Roy and Dann Thomas, with art and cover by Greg Brooks.

FIRESTORM #74
For months now, Ronnie Raymond has believed his friend and former partner in Firestorm was dead . . . but now he's not so sure. The quest for Martin Stein begins now, written by John Ostrander, with art by Joe Brozowski and Sam De La Rosa. Cover pencilled by Brozowski.

FLASH #15
The debut of a new creative team . . . and a host of troubles for Flash, who's left powerless, with no job, no money and even less hope. Where does Wally West go from here? Written by William Messner-Loebs, pencilled by Greg LaRocque and inked by Larry Mahlstedt. Cover by George Pérez.

JUSTICE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL #16
Operating undercover, the JLI's mission is to overthrow the dictatorship in Bialy . . . except it looks as though someone might beat them to the punch. Written by Keith Giffen and J.M. DeMatteis, with art by Kevin Maguire and Al Gordon.

MANHUNTER #2
The hunt is on, leading Manhunter to Tokyo in pursuit of a faceless assassin. Written by John Ostrander and Kim Yale, with art by Doug Rice and Sam Kieth. Cover by Rice and Kieth.

OUTCASTS #11
(of a 12-issue maxi-series)
The Satan Brothers are back, madder and badder than ever, raising fire and brimstone in a last-ditch effort to stop the Outcasts . . . an effort that finally succeeds in cutting down the Outcasts' lineup. Written by John Wagner and Alan Grant, with art by Cam Kennedy and Steve Montano. Cover by Kennedy.
Deluxe Format.

SUPERMAN ANNUAL #2
The Newsboy Legion may be older, but they're not much wiser when it comes to avoiding trouble. Now they're trapped in the malevolent grasp of Sieez . . . and Superman and the Guardian must rescue them before their experiments destroy all of Metropolis. Written by Roger Stern and pencilled by Ron Frenz. Plus: a special look at the private lives of Terrible Turpin and Maggie Sawyer by John Byrne. Cover by Frenz and Byrne.

WONDER WOMAN #19
Who will save Diana from the terrible fate awaiting her at the hands of the mysterious sorceress of the tower? Written and pencilled by George Pérez and inked by Dick Giordano. Cover by Pérez.

WORLD OF METROPOLIS #1
(of a four-issue mini-series)
A dramatic, in-depth look at the lives of two of the most influential men in Superman's life—Perry White and Lex Luthor. Discover the terrible secret they share and learn how it affects every person living in Metropolis. Written by John Byrne and pencilled by Winslow Mortimer.

YOUNG ALL-STARS #15
"Iron" Munro may become the first super-hero to ever flunk out of high school . . . unless Deathbolt has his way, in which case Munro won't even survive the semester. Written by Roy and Dann Thomas, with art by Ron Harris and Malcolm Jones III. Cover by Harris.
New Format.

BOOKS SHIPPING APRIL 19

ACTION COMICS WEEKLY #603
The adventures of Green Lantern, Deadman, The Secret Six, Wild Dog, Blackhawk and Superman continue, this week featuring Kyle Baker's rendition of Blackhawk on the cover.

THE BATMAN #422
Batman stalks the back alleys of Gotham in search of the Dumpster Slayers . . . while elsewhere, Robin succumbs to the darker side of his nature. Written by Jim Starlin, with art by Mark Bright and Mike DeCarlo.

GREEN ARROW #7
Alaska holds the lead Green Arrow needs to crack Chinese tong activity while Black Canary stays behind to investigate in Seattle. Written by Mike Grell, with art by Ed Hannigan and Dick Giordano. The Black Canary chapter is by writer Sharon Wright and penciller Randy DeBurke, who will be the creative team on Black Canary's upcoming solo series in ACTION COMICS WEEKLY. Cover by Hannigan.
Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.

GREEN LANTERN CLOISONNE PIN
For years it's stood as a symbol of justice and power across the universe, and now you can be identified as a member of the Corps with the GREEN LANTERN CLOISONNE PIN, featuring the green power battery design in a white circle.

HELLBLAZER #8
Injured and helpless, John Constantine is tortured by dark secrets from his all-too-painful past. Written by Jamie Delano, with art by John Ridgway. Painted cover by Dave McKean.
Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.

INFINITY, INC. #53
It's the showdown that had to come as the final issue of Infinity, Inc., brings what's left of the Infinitors up against Injustice Unlimited. Who will live and who will die . . . and what new team will arise from the ashes of the old? Written by Roy and Dann Thomas, with art by Michael Bair and Bob Downs. Cover by Bair. *Deluxe Format.*

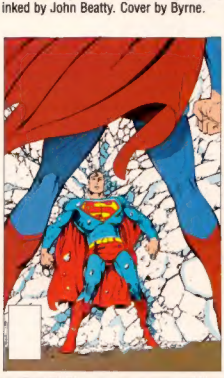
LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #49
It's the time for deadly revelations as the Legionnaires uncover the conspirators in their midst . . . and Starfinger reveals his infiltrators. Written by Paul Levitz, with art by Pat Broderick and Mike DeCarlo. Cover by Ken Steacy. *Deluxe Format.*

MARTIAN MANHUNTER #4
(of a four-issue mini-series)
His past no longer a mystery to him, J'onn J'onzz must now look toward the future . . . provided he can survive the present. Written by J.M. DeMatteis, with art and cover by Mark Badger.
New Format.

SECRET ORIGINS #29
His days leading the Mord'laihans are drawing to a close. Now, learn the secret origin of Ray Palmer, the Atom, and prepare yourself for next week's debut of THE POWER OF THE ATOM. Written by Roger Stern, pencilled by Dwayne Turner and inked by Keith Wilson. Also, from the days of World War II, the secret origin of Mr. America by Roy Thomas, with art by Mike Harris. Plus, a brief look at one of the Golden Age's first, and funniest, heroes . . . the original Red Tornado, written and drawn by Sheldon Mayer.

STAR TREK #53
As Kirk lays dying, security searches for the attacker . . . but that doesn't prevent everyone from pausing for some final reflections. Written by Peter David, with art by Gordon Purcell and Ricardo Villagran. Cover by Jerome Moore and Keith Wilson.

SUPERMAN #21
Beginning a three-part epic chronicling the first meeting between the Man of Steel and the mysterious Supergirl who's been appearing in various issues of the SUPERMAN titles. Continues next week in ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #443. Written and pencilled by John Byrne and inked by John Beatty. Cover by Byrne.



SUPERMAN #21

WHO'S WHO IN THE DC UNIVERSE UPDATE '88 #1
(of a four-issue mini-series)
Updating the old and revealing the secrets of the new, this year's Update brings you the latest information on the inhabitants of the DC Universe. This month, the newest on characters like Brainiac and groups such as Checkmate and the Chosen.

BOOKS SHIPPING APRIL 26

ACTION COMICS WEEKLY #604
More of the weekly adventures of Green Lantern, Deadman, The Secret Six, Wild Dog, Blackhawk and Superman. Wild Dog is featured on the cover by Klaus Janson.

ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #443
Part 2 of the Man and Girl of Steel saga as Superman pursues the mysterious Supergirl into Time Trapper's Pocket Universe, where he's confronted with the deaths of Ma and Pa Kent. Concludes next week in SUPERMAN #22.

THE BATMAN ANNUAL #12
The grounds of a crumbling mansion are the scene for the Batman's hunt for two foes—one a ruthless killer, the other, something that may not even be human. Written by Mike Baron and pencilled by Ross Andru. Plus, a special private life feature spotlighting Jason Todd, by Robert Greenberger and Norm Breyfogle. Cover by Mike Kaluta.

BATMAN: THE CULT POSTER
Prepare yourself for the coming excitement of the Batman's next great Prestige Format adventure with the poster for Jim Starlin and Berni Wrightson's BATMAN: THE CULT. Featuring a new painting by Wrightson, this is a 22" × 28" full-process color poster.

THE DOOM PATROL #11
Garguax strikes . . . and Cliff Steele is his first target in his planned conquest of Earth. And, Larry Trainor plots to regain his lost powers with the help of Reactron. Written by Paul Kupperberg, with art and cover by Erik Larsen and Gary Martin.

FLASH GORDON #3
(of a nine-issue maxi-series)
Flash and Dale are learning all about the flora and fauna of Mongo the hard way in their encounter with the Shark Men, while Ming the Merciless continues his evil schemes. Written and pencilled by Dan Jurgens and inked by Bruce Patterson. Cover by Jurgens and Patterson.
New Format.

THE NEW TEEN TITANS #46
With Raven missing and the rest of the Titans defeated, only Jericho remains to stop the woman who can dial herself up as any villain. Written by Marv Wolfman, with art by Eduardo Barreto and Romeo Tanghal. Cover by Barreto.
Deluxe Format.

POWER OF THE ATOM #1
After his years in the jungle, the Atom returns to America . . . but he's got a lot to readjust to in his new life, especially the changes in his own body. This new continuing series is by Roger Stern, with art and cover by Dwayne Turner and Keith Wilson.

THE SHADOW #13
The story of "The Seven Deadly Finns" comes to a most unexpected conclusion . . . and it may be the end of the Shadow as well. Written by Andrew Helfer, with art and painted cover by Kyle Baker.
Suggested for Mature Readers. Deluxe Format.

SILVERBLADE #11
(for a 12-issue maxi-series)
Silverblade is unable to resist the efforts of the bird-demon to "repossess" him . . . and the one thing that can release him may be out of his reach. Written by Cary Bates, with art and cover by Gene Colan and Steve Mitchell.
Deluxe Format.

SWAMP THING #75
The end of an era in the lives of all the plant elementals . . . and the beginning of a new one. Written and pencilled by Rick Veitch and inked by Alfredo Alcala. Cover by John Totleben and Rick Veitch.
Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.

WHO'S WHO IN THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #5
(of a seven-issue maxi-series)
The definitive look at the greatest heroes of the 30th Century and their friends and foes continues, this issue focusing on heroes from Phantom Girl to Saturn Girl. Written by Barbara Randall, with art by Keith Giffen, Greg LaRocque and others. Cover by LaRocque.

WRATH OF THE SPECTRE #4
(of a four-issue mini-series)
Almost 15 years after they were written, Michael Fleisher's startling three-part conclusion to the controversial Spectre series in ADVENTURE COMICS is finally being published. Newly drawn by Jim Aparo and Mike DeCarlo, you can finally read the end of this series as it was originally intended. Wraparound cover by Aparo.
Deluxe Format.

BOOKS SHIPPING MAY 3

ACTION COMICS WEEKLY #605
Deadman is spotlighted on this week's cover by Adam Kubert and Andy Kubert, and his adventure continues within, along with those of Green Lantern,

The Secret Six, Wild Dog, Blackhawk and Superman.

CAPTAIN ATOM #18
General Eiling and Dr. Megala are having their final showdown . . . and Captain Atom is caught smack in the middle of their personal war. Written by Cary Bates, with art by Pat Broderick and Bob Smith. Cover by Broderick.

DETECTIVE COMICS #589
It's a three-way duel to the death as the Batman, Mr. Kadaver and the Burning Man all meet as the saga of the Night People concludes. Written by John Wagner and Alan Grant, with art by Norm Breyfogle. Plus: DC BONUS BOOK #5, showcasing the new wave of DC talent. Poison Ivy is out of prison and unknowingly carrying a deadly disease that could decimate Gotham in 12 hours unless the Batman can find her. Written by Lewis Klahr and Steve Piersall, with art by Dean Haspiel and Denys Rodier.

POWER GIRL #3
(of a four-issue mini-series)
The Weaver's black magic is finally revealed to Power Girl as she takes the battle against the forces of Chaos straight into the heart of Darkworld . . . with the assistance of the Phantom Stranger. Written by Paul Kupperberg, with art by Rick Hoberg and Arne Starr. Cover by Kerry Gammill and Dick Giordano.

SPECTRE #17
Jim Corrigan confronts his final destiny . . . and the Spectre gets a new start and a new look as the series moves in a new direction. Written by Doug Moench, pencilled by Chris Wozniak and inked by Mark Farmer.
New Format.

STAR TREK ANNUAL #3
You always thought that Scotty's greatest love were his engines, but there's an even greater love in his past, revealed for the first time in a very special love story. Written by Peter David, with art by Curt Swan and Ricardo Villagran. Cover by Gray Morrow.

SUICIDE SQUAD #16
The final part of three as the Squad takes a wrong turn . . . and winds up in the Meta Zone, home dimension to one of DC's strangest heroes, Shade the Changing Man. Written by John Ostrander, with art by Luke McDonnell and Bob Lewis. Cover by Jerry Bingham.

SUPERMAN #22
The conclusion of the three-part mystery of Supergirl as Superman joins forces with Lex Luthor to decide the ultimate fate of the Pocket Universe. Written and pencilled by John Byrne and inked by Karl Kesel. Cover by Byrne.

WASTELAND #9
You never know what may be waiting outside your door . . . these three tales are just some of the possible horrors. Stories by John Ostrander and Del Close, with art by David Lloyd, William Messner-Loebs and Donald Simpson. Cover by George Freeman.

BOOKS SHIPPING MAY10

ACTION COMICS WEEKLY #606
Superman is this week's cover feature, with art by Kerry Gammill and John Nyberg, and his adventure continues inside along with those of Green Lantern, The Secret Six, Wild Dog, Blackhawk and Deadman.

ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN ANNUAL #2
It's Clark Kent's turn to play the hero as he invades a hostile Middle Eastern country to save the life of a fellow reporter. But once there, Superman finds he's up against more than terrorists when he faces a new breed of deadly subterranean menaces. Written by Jerry Ordway and pencilled by John Statema. Plus, a look into the private life of the Superman family, written by John Byrne. Cover by Ordway.

BATMAN: THE CULT #1
(of a four-book mini-series)
Can even the Batman survive the weeks of torment inflicted on him by the charismatic Deacon Blackfire in the sewers beneath Gotham City? Beginning the four-book Prestige Format mini-series written by Jim Starlin, with art by Berni Wrightson. Painted cover by Wrightson.
Prestige Format.

CHECKMATE #6
The trail of international arms smuggling leading from Venice and Dallas converge in the Middle East as Checkmate goes to Israel to foil the plot—and discover ties that point straight to the U.S. government. Written by Paul Kupperberg, with art by Steve Erwin and Al Vey. Plus, Part 3 of 3 of "The Making of a Knight" as the knight candidate takes command of a deadly situation. Written by Kupperberg.
New Format.

COPS #1
The premiere of an exciting new action series from Hasbro Toys and DC Comics, introducing the greatest crime-fighting team of the future—COPS. This double-sized issue features the origin of COPS, based on the one-hour pilot for the animated TV series. Written by Doug Moench and pencilled by Pat Broderick.

FLASH #16
Lucky for a powerless Flash confronting the Speed Demon and Blue Trinity that the showdown's taking place in a hospital. He just might need the facilities. Written by William Messner-Loebs, with art by Greg LaRocque and Larry Mahlstedt. Cover by George Pérez.

MANHUNTER #3
Manhunter Mark Shaw is trapped in Japan with Dumas hot on his heels. What other choice does he have but to go to the Japanese mob for help? Also, more on the mystery of Olivia Van Croft. Written by John Ostrander and Kim Yale, with art and cover by Doug Rice and Sam Kieth.

THE PHANTOM #4
(of a four-issue mini-series)
Twin tales set in different eras come to their conclusions as the modern-day Phantom and his ancestor, the 13th Phantom, both confront the Chessman. Written by Peter David, with art by Joe Orlando and Dennis Janke. Cover by Orlando and Dave Gibbons.
New Format.

THE QUESTION #19
The Question is on the trail of the terrorist suppliers of plastic guns, while Myra faces a crucial moral dilemma in the heated race for mayor of Hub City. Written by Dennis O'Neil, with art by Denys Cowan and Rick Magyar. Cover by Cowan and Bill Sienkiewicz.
Suggested for Mature Readers. Deluxe Format.

SECRET ORIGINS ANNUAL #2
It's the origins of the Flash . . . and Flash. The Flash died in the pages of the CRISIS . . . and here's what happened next. The final Barry Allen story, written by Robert Loren Fleming, with art by Carmine Infantino and Murphy Anderson. Also, the origin of the current Flash, from his beginnings as Wally West, through his days as Kid Flash and beyond. Written by William Messner-Loebs, with art by Mike Collins and Al Vey. Cover by Infantino, Collins and Anderson.

SONIC DISRUPTORS #8
(of a 12-issue maxi-series)
It's "Full Tilt Boogie" as the Sheik and his friends form an uneasy alliance with the Red Chinese to avenge Billy Bob's murder. Written by Mike Baron, with art and cover by Barry Crain and John Nyberg.
Suggested for Mature Readers. Deluxe Format.

WANDERERS #3
The Legion of Super-Heroes guest star as the Wanderers, hot on the trail of trouble, wind up in dire circumstances. Written by Doug Moench, with art by Dave Hoover and Robert Campanella. Cover by Ken Steacy.
New Format.

WONDER WOMAN #20
Diana learns that there are no easy answers to the deadly question of "Who Killed Myndi Mayer?" Written and pencilled by George Pérez and inked by Bob McLeod. Cover by Pérez.

YOUNG ALL-STARS #16
Now it can be told—the secret origin of Neptune Perkins, the human dolphin. But it's a story that will have to be told against the All-Stars' battle with Dr. Thule and the super-human Vril. Written by Roy and Dann Thomas, with art by Mike Bair and Malcolm Jones III. Cover by Bair.
New Format.

people at WORK

WILLIAM MESSNER-LOEBS

Ever since his resurrection in the late 1950s heralded the start of the Silver Age of comics, Flash has held a special place in the hearts and memories of comic book fans. Among those fans who hold these memories is writer/artist William Messner-Loebs, and now, almost 30 years later, they're about to serve him in good stead as he takes over the writer's slot on that very title.

"I remember when the first ads for the Flash started appearing," Bill recalls today. "It showed a sports car and a cheetah and a locomotive, stating how fast each moved, but that the Flash was faster than all of them put together. I waited for that book; I remember buying the first issue. Now I have the chance to do Flash, to get him off the ground and running, to be like I remember it. I have a chance to actually put my mouth where my nostalgia is."

But before coming on board to write one of comic's historic heroes, Bill went through a bit of history of his own. "My dad was an optical engineer for the space program," says Bill. "He was one of the first people to apply fiberoptics to industrial use on the first space shot." The family moved around a bit because of his father's work. "I was born in Lansing, MI, in February 1949, but I spent most of my formative years in Huntsville, AL, and New Orleans, until I went back to Michigan after my second year in college."

Back in Lansing, Bill ran a small boat-building business for a while before embarking on a new life-style that was something of an adventure. "A couple I knew from college and I homesteaded on the Canadian border, pretty much self-sufficient because we were so remote. We even grew our own food. The winds would be 60 miles per hour in the winter, the temperature 60 below zero. *Journey* (Bill's series about frontiersman Wolverine MacAlistaire set in the wilderness of Michigan in 1811) isn't completely autobiographical, but I know what it's like to be in the middle of nowhere, where there was no help if we got into trouble."

A history major in college, Bill says that "what I wanted to do was to write pulp novels. I had read a lot of them, but I wasn't quite cognizant of the fact that they hadn't been published for 30 years. That kind of closed off that market.

"I supported myself for a while selling fine art at art fairs until I was finally hired by Power Comics, one of the first of the small independent publishers out in Lansing. I'm a self-taught artist, and it wasn't until I was hired by Power that I felt constrained to actually learn how to draw. I met Mike Gustovich, artist of *Justice Machine*, then and he taught me all the comic book fundamentals. At least as many as I know," he laughs.

"I learned a lot from studying Burne Hogarth's 'how to' books on art and anatomy and by just looking at what others were doing in the field. My style, as it jelled together, is sort of Will Eisner pencilling with Berni Wrightson inking . . . except for the arm muscles, which I swiped badly from Neal Adams. But the best training I got was working with artist friends in a studio setup, where we could trade influences and teach one another what we knew."

A few stories for Power Comics and a meeting with then Aardvark-Vanheim publisher Deni Loubert at a comic book convention led to Bill's creating the ongoing series *Journey*, which he both wrote and drew. After a while, he found himself being offered additional work by other publishers, which led him to taking on the regular scripting chores of Comico's *Jonny Quest* comic, an adaptation of the 1960s animated TV series. He also did some art for First Comics.

"After Mike Gold came to DC," Bill says, "He asked me to be part of the team he was assembling for the anthology horror comic *Wasteland*. I liked the idea of his approach using the EC format, but without their approach. The artists and writers and not the books' characters were to provide the continuity from issue to issue. I think it's been a successful experiment."

And then came *Flash*. After creating quite a stir with his first 15 issues, writer Mike Baron was leaving the book he had revamped from the ground up. Editor Gold tapped Bill to take his place.

"I want to bring back the real sense of wonder about the speed element," Bill says of his new charge. "That sort of thing went away after the first few issues . . . I remember the famous scene in the origin story, when Barry Allen grabs the falling tray of food out of thin air? I also want to investigate the nature of Flash's speed, come up with some interesting ideas of how he got his powers, the actual mechanism that drives him, and its nature from Wally West's point of view. I'll also be dealing with how he lost his powers, of course, and how he's going to get them back.

"Oh, and no one in any book I'm writing is ever going to go faster than the speed of light. It's the lynchpin that holds the universe together and if you violate that, you don't have any basis for reality. I'm sorry, but you can go fast enough without exceeding the speed of light.

"I want to firm up some of the supporting cast, redefine them for my use, especially Chunk, Jerry, Tina McGee and Wally's mother. They'll be carrying more of their share of the load. As for Flash himself, Mike had him as a guy with a mouth and an attitude, and that part I'd like to keep. But I see him as perhaps more likable than Mike did, so I'll probably be going in that direction.

"Another thing I'm doing," Bill continues, "is to . . . well, not precisely bring Barry Allen back as a character, since he's dead, but as a presence in the book. Barry was the biggest influence in Wally's life, and when he hits bottom, as he usually does, he's going to be remembering Barry and what he meant to him."

Bill indicates that there are a number of old Flash villains being considered for revision, but he's holding off on the names until plans are firmed up. But he does have a definite idea of how he wants to portray the criminal element in Flash. "I want to get into the banality and ridiculousness of a lot of crime. I collect weird crime cases . . . like about the man who walked into a bank with a revolver stuffed in his belt, announced it was a robbery, pulled the gun out and shot himself in the stomach and died.

"Wally will be running into real crime, as it is out in the streets with all its sometimes ridiculousness, rather than odd-shaped beings coming down from the stars and turning whole cities into muskrats."

Judging from his past accomplishments, Bill Messner-Loebs is a talent to be watched and, as fast as Flash is, he's going to have to stay on his toes to keep up with the man now scripting his monthly adventures.

The ATOM

From the archives of the DC Comics library, we bring you the cover of SHOWCASE #34 (1961), which includes the Silver Age Atom's first appearance and origin.